

# **Ocean Beach Vehicular Access Study at Fort Fisher State Recreation Area**

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## **Final Report : Economic Impact Analysis**

## **Addendum--Impacts of Current Policy**

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### **Introduction and Scenario Definition**

This addendum to the report "Ocean Beach Vehicular Access Study at Fort Fisher State Recreation Area, Final Report: Economic Impact Analysis," provides economic impact estimates for an additional policy scenario, as requested by the study sponsors. The additional policy scenario is the current policy in place during the summer of 2004, namely, a ban on nighttime (only) vehicular access to Fort Fisher State Recreation Area (FOFI), New Hanover county, North Carolina, during the spring/summer season (only) (defined as March 16 -- September 14 for the purposes of this analysis). Under this "Current Policy Scenario," vehicular access to the beach is allowed during the day year

round and also during the night in the fall/winter season (defined as September 15 -- March 15 for the purposes of this analysis).

As documented in the main body of the report, the baseline number of annual beach vehicle trips to FOFI, 28,884 trips/yr, supports an estimated \$21.6 million in annual regional sales, 382 regional jobs, and \$3.7 million in annual combined Federal, state and local tax revenues.

Of the visitors surveyed 39.2% (47/120) were local residents while 60.8% (73/120) were non-residents. Of these local users 40.4% said they would still come to the Carolina Beach/Kure Beach area, and presumably spend money, even if driving were prohibited at FOFI. Local users accounted for 86.1% of evening trips at FOFI during the spring/summer months while the fall/winter percentage was 71.1%. Although local residents represent the larger proportion of night driving at FOFI, their average expenditures were less than out-of-town visitors.

The current policy results in an estimated reduction of 2,253 night vehicle trips to FOFI during the spring/summer season. Survey results indicate that approximately 52 percent of these recreational trips would still be made to the Carolina Beach/Kure Beach area, but would not include driving on the beach at FOFI as part of the trip experience.

## **Results and Discussion**

The current policy results in an estimated loss of \$859,590/yr in regional sales (Table 12), 15 regional jobs (Table 13), and \$149,334/yr (Table 14) in combined Federal, state and local tax revenues. (These estimates include the economic impacts of those recreationists who made vehicular beach trips to FOFI under the baseline scenario and who continue to make recreational trips *that do not include driving on the beach at FOFI* to the local area under the current policy scenario.)

These estimates are based on the best available data (described in the main body of the report). However, the best available data consist of estimates of spring/summer season trip activity made by FOFI vehicle trip recreationists surveyed during the fall/winter season. More accurate estimates would be possible if spring/summer season survey data were available for analysis.